

### **Study Guide: Ephesians 1:15-23**

Further Reading: Psalm 8, Romans 8:38-39, Philippians 2:5-11, Colossians 1:3-14

1. Are you praying these days? What has been your typical response when you watch the news, or read the headlines in our world this week?
2. Paul begins his prayer for the Ephesians with a response to the blessings we receive in Christ. Read Ephesians 1:3-14. What are some of the blessings we receive?
3. Read Ephesians 1:15-16. Paul's prayer of response begins with thanksgiving for the love the Ephesians have for God and for all people. The Ephesians are faithful and loving; two important parts of Paul's teaching (1 Corinthians 13:13, 1 Thessalonians 1:3). Why do you think this is how the prayer begins?
4. Read Eph 1:17-18. "When we are attentive to the Spirit's work in us, more and more light shines in the darkness of our understanding and transforms us within." The hymn *Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus* is used to illustrate this point. How would you describe the Spirit of wisdom and revelation at work in your life in helping you know God better?
5. Read Eph 1:19-23. The hope of our calling is that we are meant to be God's chosen people. Paul's understanding of God's people becoming His glorious inheritance is based on covenant and blessing. Jesus is given for us and we are given back to Him as His inheritance. Paul says the same power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead and seating him in the heavenly realms is *for us* who believe. What do you think it means that God has given this *same power* to His people, to claim us as His own?
6. Ephesians 1:23 (the Message translation) reads, "The church is Christ's body, in which he speaks and acts, by which he fills everything with His Presence." Why does it matter that Christ is head over everything *for the church* and His Presence fills all things? Where do you see Christ's body and His Presence when we cannot gather on Sundays?
7. "We, the church, are not Christ. We are His body; his hands and feet called to be the blessing for a world in desperate need." Reflect on the illustration of the water bearer and the cracked pot. In what ways are the water bearer and the cracked pot an illustration of the solidarity between Christ and the church?
8. What are some practical ways we can dig deep in prayer, power and presence and be the blessing our world so desperately needs? Name one way you will practice being the blessing this week in your community with your family your neighbours, and your church.